CONSUMER TIME

WOMEN'S LAND ARMY

NETWORK: NBC DATE: April 7, 1945

ORIGIN: WRC TIME: 12:15-12:30 PM- EWT

(Produced by the War Food Administration, this script is for reference only and may not be broadcast without special permission. The title CONSUMER TIME is restricted to network broadcast of the program...presented for more than eleven years in the interest of consumers.)

0

1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE....MONEY IN TILL

2. JOHN: It's CONSUMER TIME!

3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER

4. ANNCR: During the next 15 minutes, the National Broadcasting Company and its affiliated independent stations make their facilities available as a public service for the presentation of CONSUMER TIME by the War Food Administration!

5. FREYMAN: Let's set the stage for our drama today, Johnny!

6. JOHN: Yes, today we've got a great story to tell! All about an Army made up of women! Soldiers who carry pitchforks and rakes instead of machine guns...who drive tractors...instead of tanks.

7. FREYMAN: The great Women's Land Army of the U. S. A.!

8. JOHN: Last year, farmer's wives and families worked harder than ever before. And thousands of women came out of the towns and cities to help on farms everywhere!

9. FREYMAN: Well, the time has come again this year when many of us are planning our summer vacations. Lots of us want to help out on farms again this summer. And many women who haven't done it before, will make plans to join the Women's Land Army!

10. JOHN: But I think we should mention that Land Army work isn't too easy, Mrs. Freyman.

11. FREYMAN: Oh no indeed! It's hard work! And we're going to hear all about it in our story today.

12. JOHN: All right, and here goes! Once upon a time there was a farmer, who owned a rich, pleasant little farm. He was a hard-working conscientious farmer...but when the war came, his farmhands and tenants left him one by one to join the Army, or to take jobs in war plants.

13. FREYMAN: So...he became quite desperate, as his vegetables were growing up in weeds; his corn was sadly in need of de-tasseling, and... the hay should have been cut a long time ago.

14. JOHN: He'd heard about the Women's Land Army...but for him, nothing doing! No women working on his farm! And as our scene opens, we find farmer MacGregor talking disconsolately to his county agent....

15. MACGREGOR Well...beats me. I don't know what I'm going to do. Last farmhand left this morning to join the Army...can't even get anybody part time. I'll lose my whole tomato crop is something doesn't turn up.

16. AGENT: But I've told you so many times, MacGregor. Why don't you...

17. MACGREGOR: (INTERRUPTING) Yes...I know, I know...why don't I get some of those volunteers from the city...some of those...those...women. No sir!

18. AGENT: Now look, MacGregor. I can show you...I can prove where women have helped out on farms all around here. Farmers who felt just the way you do...have found that women do a real fine job.

19. MACGREGOR: No sir! I'll lose my whole crop...let the barn fall in and the hogs run wild...'fore I have any women giggling and gabbling and cluttering up my place. For the last time NO WOMEN! (FADE)

PAUSE:

20. JOHN: But alas, as the season drew on, MacGregor's farm went from bad to worse. First of all there was cultivating to be done, and weeding...to say nothing of such little chores as mending fences and oiling the machinery...there was a tractor to run, too. Yes...it had to be. Old MacGregor...who wouldn't let a woman within sight of the house...had to go back to Jim Brown, the county agent.

He had to ask where he could find...yes...some Land Army women to help him with the farm work.

So...now it's next morning, and an old station wagon clatters up the road. MacGregor puts his hands over his ears; starts to hurry into the house...then he takes a deep breath and goes out to meet them. Yes...all three of them...

21. ELLA: (ON THE GUSHY SIDE) My! Mr. MacGregor. This is the most bee-autiful place! Gracie, look at that adorable little old house...

22. GRACIE: And that sweet little red barn.

23. MARY: (SOUTHERN) Oh I'm sure we're simply going to love it here, aren't we girls!

24. ELLA: I should say so! (DEEP BREATH) Well, Mr. MacGregor. Here we are! We've come to help you do just any little thing you want done.

25. MARY: I can pick apples.

26. GRACE: Shhh, Mary. This isn't apple season!

27. MARY: Well, I can pick peaches, then! I love to climb trees.

28. ELLA: Quiet, Mary...Mr. MacGregor will tell us what to do, won't you Mr. MacGregor?

29. MACGREGOR: (SURLY) If I can just say a word, ladies...

30. ELLA: Why of course!

31. MACGREGOR: I didn't ask for, well...high school girls. I asked for women. Big women. Someone's could drive a tractor and cultivate my corn.

32. MARY: (INDIGNANT) Why...we're not high school girls! I've been working in the Watertown First National Bank for three years...

33. MACGREGOR: But look, now...what I mean...

34. ELLA: High school girls! Why I'm married...

35. GRACE: And her husband's overseas. And I...I'm on vacation. I've got a job at...

36. MACGREGOR: Hold it...hold it...never mind, ladies...what I mean is, on my farm you got to work. There's a lot to be done. This ain't a picnic, understand...

37. GRACE: But of course we understand!

38. MACGREGOR: But this'n...this'n here, in those citified spike-heeled shoes she's wearin'...

39. MARY: You mean me? Why, Mr. MacGregor, my work-clothes are in my suitcase. Here...let's get our bags and change. We've got to get to work!

40. ELLA: (PROJECTING) Isn't this a divine place...
(SLOW FADE)

41. GRACE: It's so quaint. This dear little rickety porch...and those darling little old fashioned chairs.... It's simply lovely....
(FADE OUT)

PAUSE:

42. SOUND: THELEPHONE RING...(COUNTRY PHONE, BEING RUNG BY HAND)

43. MACGREGOR: H'lo, hello operator, gimme Jim Brown the county agent...fast's you can. (PAUSE) (GROWL ASIDE) Women! (SLIGHT PAUSE) Hello! Hello, Jim? Yep, this is MacGregor. Now look, Jim I'm keeping my temper...I'm not using any cuss words over the phone, I'm simply asking you decent-like to get-over-here-as-soon-as-you-can-and-get-these-women-off-my-place-and-out-of-my-house.... (MORE)

MACGREGOR (CONT'D) Now I'm not foolin'. Not for one minute, understand? I don't care if you have to come over here on roller skates, I'm not going to...what? Yes, Jim, I know you said...no, but I...a week? Try 'em for a week? Aw, now look, Jim...NO! No sir! No sir! (FADE)

44. JOHN: But MacGregor got nowhere with Jim Brown. He'd contracted for Land Army women to help on the farm, and he'd got what he'd asked for. They're on trial now for a week...and we find the reluctant farmer and his three feminine farmhands, out in the barnyard, for the first lesson...

45. MACGREGOR: (SURLY) Now this here's a hoe. You use this end, not this end. And you dig up weeds like this...

46. ELLA: Oh now for goodness sake, Mr. MacGregor, I know how to use a hoe! Give it to me, and tell me what you want weeded...

47. MACGREGOR: Over yonder in that patch there...and mind you dig up weeds and not my vegetables...hey wait!

48. ELLA: (PROJECTING) What!

49. MACGREGOR: (CALLING) How do you tell a weed from a vegetable?

50. ELLA: (PROJECTING) Oh, that's easy. Vegetables grow in a straight line ...and weeds seem to grow just anywhere.

51. MACGREGOR: (ASIDE) Oh, tarnation...there goes all my cabbages and carrots... and...(GRIM) Wait'll I get that Jim Brown...

52. MARY: What do you want me to do, Mr. MacGregor?

53. MACGREGOR: Yes. (SKEPTICAL) Let's see now. Can you drive a truck?

54. MARY: Oh why sure!

55. MACGREGOR: O.K. then. We got a lot of hay to pick up out there in the field, so you take the truck on out there, and I'll follow'n a minute. (CALLING OFF) I'll get this gate open...

56. MARY: (WHISPER) Grace!

57. GRACE: What?

57A. MARY: (DESPERATELY) I don't know how to drive...

57B. GRACE: Gee whilikers, Mary, why'd you tell him...?

58. MARY: Oh, he thinks we don't know anything. I want to show him...

59. GRACE: (WAIL) Maybe we don't know anything.

60. MARY: Look, tell me how to drive, quick...

61. GRACE: Well...(QUICKLY) You gotta turn the key on. That's first... then put the gear in neutral and step on the starter and put the clutch in and shift the gear in first and let the clutch up but not too quick, understand...and...here he comes. Never mind, Mary, I'll do it! I can drive.

62. MARY: Gee thanks, Grace.

63. MACGREGOR: All right...gate's open, now take it easy goin' across the field, it's bumpy out there. Hey! I thought you were going to drive.

64. MARY: Oh Grace learned how to drive things like trucks and so on in tractor school.

65. MACGREGOR: (SKEPTICAL) Well, better get on out there. Looks cloudy and we got to get that hay in case it rains.

66. GRACE: All right! Bye!

67. MARY: Oh! (LITTLE LAUGH) Oh, Mr. MacGregor...I mean...now...well, do show me all around the yard, here! Oh...look at those little pigs...aren't they adorable.

68. MACGREGOR: Now, look, young lady...I...

69. MARY: Aren't they the sweetest things! Can't we feed 'em out of a milk bottle or something? I've seen pictures in the paper about feeding pigs out of a milk bottle.

70. SOUND: TRUCK ROARS UP OVER THIS LAST SENTENCE AND MARY SHOUTS REMAINDER OF ABOVE OVER TRUCK.

71. MACGREGOR: (OVER SOUND) Well, will you look at that woman handle a truck!

72. SOUND: (TRUCK ROARS OUT OVER ABOVE)

73. MACGREGOR: I'll be...for land sakes...

PAUSE:

74. MARY: Now...Mr. MacGregor! Give me something to do!

PAUSE:

74. JOHN: And so finally night falls on the MacGregor farm...and back at the camp, three tired, aching soldiers of the Women's Land Army ...climb into their beds...

75. ELLA: (SLEEPY VOICE)...(YAWN) Oh, goodness, I don't think I can straighten out, even to lie down.

76. GRACE: Why, Ellie, you hoed practically the whole vegetable garden... no wonder you're stiff...

77. MARY: You worked too hard, for the first day, Ellie.

78. ELLA: Maybe so...but I just don't like the idea he's got that we're good for nothing.

79. GRACE: I saw him stamp out to the garden...looking like a thunder cloud, because he was so sure you'd hoed up all his vegetables.

80. MARY: Yes, and he just stood there and stared! He was so surprised at how neat and pretty you weeded, Ellie! Course he didn't know you'd been to school to learn how.

81. GRACE: I've got an idea he doesn't want us very much.

82. ELLA: Well, that just makes me want to show him that we're good.

83. MARY: (GIGGLE) All right...let's show him! I'm willing...

84. GRACE: What'd you do today, Mary?

85. MARY: Oh, I fed the chickens and gathered eggs and oh yes! I made friends with a cow.

86. ELLA: Say, Mrs. MacGregor can really cook, can't she!

87. GRACE: Never thought I could eat so much! But you really need it, working like this.

88. MARY: Mrs. MacGregor kind of cheers us on, doesn't she. She doesn't exactly agree with her husband that we can't do anything!

89. GRACE: He'll find out a thing or two.

90. MARY: Oh, Ellie, he said tomorrow...we'd...Ellie, what's de-tasseling corn mean?

91. ELLA: (LAUGH) Did he say we're going to do that? I think it means taking the tassels...you know, that top flowery part, off the corn plants.

92. MARY: But...why? What's that for?

93. ELLA: (YAWN) Don't ask me...but it's hard work.

94. GRACE: I thought working on a farm would be a kind of pleasant vacation...with a little patriotism thrown in...but kids...I'm exhausted!

PAUSE:

95. JOHN: And the next morning, bright and early...not too bright, and much too early...Ellie and Mary find themselves in the middle of a field of tall waving corn, engaged in the rather acrobatic task of taking the tassels off the tops of the corn plants.

96. ELLA: Not that way, Mary...'member how Mr. MacGregor showed us... pull 'em off easy.

97. MARY: I can hardly reach these old tassels...

98. ELLA: Well, don't break off any corn stalks. Where's Grace?

99. MARY: (GIGGLE) Oh he has her running a tractor!

100. ELLA: You know, Mr. MacGregor wasn't near as grumpy this morning.

101. MARY: He almost smiled at me.

102. ELLA: Come on, Mary, let's see if we can finish this whole field today! That ought to surprise him.

103. MARY: Wait'll I write to Billy and tell him what I'm doing for the war.

104. ELLA: I've already written and told George about it. Come on, Mary, step on it. I want to see MacGregor's face when he sees we've finished this field.

105. MARY: (GRUNT OF WORKING) If this is patriotic, Ellie...it's what I call being patriotic until it hurts.

PAUSE:

106. SOUND: FADE IN TRACTOR NOISE...HOLD UNDER.

107. MACGREGOR: (SHOUTING OVER TRACTOR) Hey...hey, there!

108. GRACE: What is it?

109. MACGREGOR: Hold it there...a moment.

110. GRACE: All right.

111. MACGREGOR: Stop the tractor, will you...what'd you say your name was...?

112. GRACE: Grace!

113. MACGREGOR: All right, Grace, turn off the engine, will you.

114. SOUND: MOTOR OFF ON ABOVE

115. MACGREGOR: If...if you don't mind, I'm just gonna sit here for a moment! (APOLOGETIC LAUGH) S'kinda hot out here you know.

116. GRACE: (LIGHTLY) Does it seem hot to you? Are you tired, Mr. MacGregor?

117. MACGREGOR: No...I'm not tired...I'm just s'prised! (PAUSE) Say there young lady, where'd you ever learn to drive a tractor, anyhow?

118. GRACE: Oh (OFFHAND) I...just took a little course in tractor driving.

119. MACGREGOR: Uh, huh. I see. Well...heh...guess I never been through a field so fast before. (CHUCKLE) Feels kinda nice to sit a spell.

120. GRACE: Well! We better get going, Mr. MacGregor. We ought to get through half this field by one o'clock anyhow...

121. SOUND: MOTOR UP AT MIDDLE OF ABOVE...SHE SHOUTS OVER.

122. MACGREGOR: (SHOUTING OVER) (LAUGH) Well...you've sure got ambition, there, young lady. All right, then, let's go.

PAUSE:

123. SOUND: TELEPHONE RING, SAME AS BEFORE.

124. MACGREGOR: Hello? Please, ma'am, may I have the county agent's office, thank you ma'am? Yes ma'am. (SLIGHT PAUSE...LITTLE HUM)... Hello? Eh, hello, that you, Jim? (HESITANT) Look, Jim, eh, about those Land Army wimmin you sent over here...No, well, no I know the week's up, but I just thought I oughta call you, Jim. (MORE)

MACGREGOR (CONT'D) See, well it's like this. I reckon these here women must be different from most women. They, ah, do a pretty good job'a drivin' a tractor and cultivatin' and de-tasseling corn, and one thing and another...(HASTILY) Not that a man couldn't do it twice as good and all that! But see here, Jim, things are beginning to look kind of spruced up around here...and I reckon I'll keep 'em on a spell...least 'til the crop gets in... (FADE)...if that'll be all right, now, Jim...(OUT)

FADING IN FAST.....

125. MARY: I've finished picking tomatoes, Mr. MacGregor.

126. GRACE: Let's get out there and cut that soybean hay!

127. ELLA: It's not dark yet...we've got time to hoe those vegetables...

128. MARY: Let's get that fodder in, Mr. MacGregor.
Time to feed the stock. Turn 'em out to pasture...

129. SOUND: ALARM CLOCK

130. GRACE: (OVER CLOCK) Six o'clock! Time to get up.

131. MARY: Six o'clock...

132. ELLA: (FADING) Time to get up...
(SOUNDS AND VOICES FADE OUT TOGETHER)

PAUSE:

133. JOHN: And farmer MacGregor...found out a thing or two...about how much help Land Army women can be...when a farmer's in a jam! Now you know, friends, a great many of you listening to CONSUMER TIME today...did spend time helping on farms last summer. Farmer's wives and families...worked harder than ever, and longer hours than ever. And hundreds of women from towns and cities everywhere...took a week or two of their vacation, and went to help harvest the biggest crop this country has ever know.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D) Well, this year, the need for you women as Land Army helpers is just as great as ever. And today in the studio with us, we have a young lady...who has weeks of work in the Women's Land Army! She is Lucy Dickinson Magna, daughter of Mrs. La Fell Dickinson, President of the General Federation of Women's Clubs.

LUCY AND JOHNNY TALK FOR ONE MINUTE AND FORTY-FIVE SECONDS.

134. JOHN: Thank you very much, Lucy Dickinson Magna. Now friends, already many of you are planning your summer vacation. Perhaps this year...if you haven't done it before...you'd like to join the Army that's vitally important to the food production of the United States...the Women's Land Army!

135. FREYMAN: If you want to find out details on how you can join the Land Army...if you want to know what kind of job you'd best be suited for...and where you'll be needed most...simple write to CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C. We'll answer all your questions.

136. JOHN: Remember...that's CONSUMER TIME, Washington 25, D. C. Next week we're going to hear the latest story on the food situation...what foods are scarce and why...and what foods will be abundant during the summer.

137. FREYMAN: So be with us next week...for another edition of....

138. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...MONEY IN TILL

139. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME!

140. SOUND: CASH REGISTER.

141. JOHN: How your money buys a living in wartime!

142. SOUND: CASH REGISTER...CLOSE DRAWER.

143. ANNCR: CONSUMER TIME, written by Christine Kempton, is presented by the War Food Administration, through the facilities of the National Broadcasting Company and it's affiliated independent stations. It comes to you from Washington, D. C. This broadcast period for CONSUMER TIME has been made available as a public service. This is the National Broadcasting Company.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]